

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BACKGROUND

The Piedmont Improvement Program (PIP) is an initiative by the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT), the Norfolk Southern Railway (NS) and the North Carolina Railroad (NCR) to improve passenger and freight railroad operations along the NCR Piedmont Corridor from Raleigh to Charlotte. The NCR Piedmont Corridor consists of the Greensboro to Charlotte portion of the NS Mainline from Washington, DC and Atlanta, and the Greensboro to Raleigh portion of the NCR H-line.

The PIP primarily consists of railroad capacity projects and crossing safety projects that will facilitate the introduction of up to six daily round trip (12 daily) passenger trains along the Raleigh to Charlotte Piedmont Corridor. The proposed McLeansville Road Grade Separation Project (Project) is a component of the PIP.

PROJECT PURPOSE

The purpose of the Project is to improve vehicular mobility and safety and the efficiency of train traffic in the area around the McLeansville Road at-grade crossing of the NCR in Guilford County, North Carolina.

This Project also will facilitate and support future increased passenger rail service for the NCR Piedmont Corridor. NCDOT proposes to add six daily round trips to the NCR Piedmont Corridor between Raleigh and Charlotte.

PROPOSED ACTION

The NCDOT Rail Division proposes to improve vehicular mobility, vehicular and train safety, and the efficiency of train traffic in the area around the McLeansville Road crossing of the NCR/NS track in Guilford County, North Carolina through the following actions:

- Replace the at-grade rail crossing at McLeansville Road with a grade-separated crossing, increasing safety by eliminating train-vehicle conflicts and reducing train horn noise. This also will improve mobility for vehicles by removing the need to stop for passing trains and trains parked on the rail siding.
- Improve the train operations at a rail siding by allowing trains to use the full length of the siding for storage and passing, which is currently segmented by the McLeansville Road crossing and two other crossings.
- Close two other at-grade rail crossings: a public crossing at Carmon Road to the east and the Bullard and Black private crossing located between the McLeansville Road and Carmon Road railroad crossings for safety reasons. These closures also will reduce train horn noise.
- As a consequence of constructing a grade separation at McLeansville Road, realign Bethel Church Road to reconnect to McLeansville Road farther south due to grade and sight distance considerations. In addition, construct a short extension of Hines Andrews Road to reconnect to the realigned Bethel Church Road.
- Provide a new service road access from Hines Andrews Road to the two residences that are currently accessed from Frieden Church Road via the Bullard and Black private railroad crossing.